

Acknowledgement: Supplementary timeline and records from the Mayo Historical Archives provided courtesy of Mr. Jeffrey Daehn, Bell Master, and Ms Karen F. Koka, Librarian, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

HOSPITALITY WITH MUSIC: THE ROCHESTER CARILLON

MYTH

Dr. Will heard carillon bells when traveling in Europe while the 1928 Plummer Building was being built. The sound was so beautiful that he decided to purchase a set for the new Clinic building. He sent a telegram to Dr. Plummer in Rochester stating that he had made the purchase and directed that the building should be altered to accommodate the bells.

FACT

The minutes of the Mayo Clinic Board of Governors meeting on **July 23, 1925**, show that Dr. Will was already at that time pursuing the idea of bringing a carillon to Rochester:

“Dr. W. J. Mayo reported a conference with Reverend G. P. Sheridan concerning the installation of a carillon at the Congregational Church. Dr. Mayo stated that he felt this was something which should not be installed in a church of any one denomination but should be placed in a tower constructed for its use in a public building.”

Several places were considered including churches, the new school building, and even the top of the water tower that was to be built on the summit of College Hill behind St. Marys Hospital. The Board minutes record that the tower of the new Clinic building was discussed as a potential location on **August 18, 1926**. Dr. Plummer did not favor the idea as it was his opinion that the plans for the building would be “almost impossible at this time to change.” A committee was appointed to “look into” the matter.

By **July 13, 1927**, the Board was clearly in favor of placing the carillon in the new Clinic building tower but thought that it might be a temporary placement until “the City or The American Legion should erect a proper structure to house it elsewhere.”

From **October 2-11, 1927**, a Mayo committee visited seven carillons on the American east coast and in Canada to help them make the final decision about the foundry from which the bells should be ordered and their configuration. Dr. Balfour noted in the Staff Meeting report of September 26, 1928, that “it was decided to duplicate the carillon in the Memorial Tower at the University of Toronto.”

Dr. Will wrote a letter on **October 11, 1927**, stating that the decision had been made to order the carillon from the Gillett & Johnston foundry in England.

The carillon was installed in the new Clinic building tower in the spring of 1928 and

Acknowledgement: Supplementary timeline and records from the Mayo Historical Archives provided courtesy of Mr. Jeffrey Daehn, Bell Master, and Ms Karen F. Koka, Librarian, Mayo Clinic, Rochester, Minnesota.

formally dedicated on **September 16, 1928.**